774 is the object of constant concern during agrarian rituals. The role of the soul of plants is particularly noticeable in their medicinal uses. Drawing a remedy from a plant may cause its death, liberating its spiritual principles for the benefit of the sick man. Because of this, such an act is equated with a blood sacrifice.

With the exception of the ngovo tomato, plants have no dya. The shadow (suma) of a plant is not independent like that of a man or an animal. It exists only through light effects and its movements are caused by the air and the wind moving its leaves and branches. This is what the Bambara means when he says that the dya has a life of its own and depends on Faro, whereas the plant's suma depends on the spirit Téliko, master of the air.

774 787 804 843 An individual's dya can be known and his temperament and life possibilities assessed by measuring his shadow on the earth at noon. The unit employed is the little finger, which is a corporeal symbol of the person. If a pregnant woman is thus measured, the sex of the child may be predicted.

774 [576] When a boy or a girl gets married, it is said of them: a ye a dya furu: "he (or she) has married his dya." For it is impolite to say that a person married anyone but his spiritual double. Besides, the union of the couple is repeated by the union of their dya which like themselves are of opposite sex. In olden times, male twins married the [595 851] same woman and the latter's dya was taken over by Faro in the Niger. The child she conceived was the son of both husbands.

589 791 Some men do not marry. This is true of the Soma, the religious diviner attached to the major Bambara societies. Initiated in the course of a solitary sojourn in the bush, he left his dya with the invisible spirits. This is a prerequisite to the gift of double sight with which he is endowed as well as a protection against possible dangers to the dya when it remains in contact with the earth, or when it approaches other humans. The true spouse of the Soma is his dya: he may mate only with it on a fixed date when the spirits return it to him for this purpose. /61/

The tere

774 The tere was inflicted by Pemba on Mousso Koroni in order to diminish her power at the time he was pursuing her. This explains its complexity: it is at once the character of a man, his strength,

778 Niger after which the reconstitution of the altar is carried on and is
794 equivalent to "the taking on a new soul." Each family member comes to the aid of the party concerned: the father gives copper, the women, peppers, the children, charcoal; a new cowrie is removed from Faro's granary.

778 The mbèndyugukã̀ (literally, I am on the enemy) is an individual
794 altar which permits its owner to overcome his adversaries and even to
754 attack their life.

The person who wishes to own one makes it after the death of an enemy. He goes secretly to unearth the corpse, shaves off its hair, cuts off its tongue and nails, and removes the eyes.

An elderly owner of such an altar takes it with him to the person who wishes to make one. The latter prepares and mixes the ingredients according to a special ritual and ties them to a hyena's tail. Before a witness who belongs to his age grade, the elder rubs the new altar on the old one seven times while reciting a prayer to consecrate it; he then returns it to its owner (1).

> 1. Because of its evil powers, the altar may not be made and entrusted to its owner except in the presence of a known witness.

The symbolism of the various parts composing it explain the use to which this altar will later be put. The tongue of the dead man contains his voice and gives to that of the owner the strength to convince those who contradict him in arguments as well as in council meetings. The eyes of the dead man permit him to see what others may not see, or even to blind his enemies by poisoning them with his nails. The hair, evidence of the other parts /134/ of the corpse, contains the nyama of the deceased and is an essential part of the mbendyugukã̀.

[595] The owner of this altar, which excludes the number four, marries only three wives. Moreover, he cannot mix his own hair with that of another without risking death.

[782] Because of its aggressive character, the mbendyugukã̀ demands victims, dogs or roosters, of red coloring. It gives to whomever owns it a strength which will always be greater than that of his competitors in whatever he may undertake.

596 deprived of his rights, he and subsequently those who would
614 represent him; the branch of the family of which he is head is henceforth dead so far as the family is concerned.

In the second place, no member of the community
[848] attains the faya unless he fulfills certain conditions, of which the first are legitimacy and primogeniture.

The fact that the claimant is a member of the com-
[578] munity implies that he is legitimate. Since it does happen, however, that the question may not have actually been investigated or, by the wish of the fa, not even been raised, the legal heirs who would be injured and intriguers who seek any pretext -- and there are always some of these persons -- raise the question, and infinite complications often follow.

Primogeniture is equally subject to challenge, and the opposition everywhere finds it a convenient motive for their machinations. It is, indeed, understandable that in polygamous
[595] households, with the wives sometimes residing in various places apart from the husband, simultaneous or at least close births give rise to disagreements as to which son was in fact the first-born.

Finally, even though he may actually be the eldest legitimate son, the claimant may find himself passed over because of measures taken [176] against him by the late fa. It appears that although custom favors the eldest legitimate son, it yields to the expressed wishes of the fa if the senate agrees to his rejecting the candidate. This is a grave step and one which may lead to the most violent reactions.

This raises the question of whether special talents or aptitudes should be required of the claimant, over and above those of legitimacy and primogeniture. For example, can he be required to be healthy, active, and a good administrator? It appears that the senate may choose to eliminate a person it deems unworthy. This applies particularly to a free man who has voluntarily fallen from that state by living like a caste member or a slave. By this behavior he has already excluded himself from the community, but it sometimes happens that his actual exclusion has not been noted or announced before the question of accession to the faya arises.

585 The husband spends the whole day after the wedding night in his hut, where relatives, friends, and neighbors come to congratulate him and present minor gifts of food. He invites them to eat and drink. The wedding is thus prolonged for several days, depending on the husband's wealth, during which time the couple is at the disposal of the guests.

[556] Rich families like to show off the trousseau, jewels, and gifts bestowed on the bride, so during the whole day after the wedding night everything is paraded with great pomp through the village by people of caste who proclaim the items and exaggerate their value. Toward evening the presents are shown one last time to the bride, who sits on a low bench with her face hidden behind a kind of tray, woven with grass, which she holds in her [533] hand. Drums and other instruments make a great uproar, while a female griot, standing behind the bride, sings love songs. Every- [302] one admires the bride's hair, which is artistically braided in a flat crest with two small braids on each side of the face hanging in front and behind the ears. The women finger her jewels as they admire them and her thick-soled sandals.

To conclude the ceremony, the furu-bolo-ma-tigi gives cowries to the leader of the singing, and guns are fired for the [481] last time. Then the bride gets up, glides over the ground without lifting her feet, and enters the hut with her companions, while the guests retire. [204]

Second Marriage

● 595 The number of wives is limited only by the necessity of providing each one with a suitable living. This means that, theoretically, polygamy is a privilege of the rich. Some men practice it in order to pass as rich men, which flatters their pride, while others use it to gratify a sensual temperament. Most often, however, people in modest circumstances have several wives solely for economic reasons.

When an only wife has young children and no servant to help her, she is extremely overworked. When this is the case,

595 she herself urges her husband to take another wife who will share some of the housework and relieve the situation. As a result, polygamy in this form resembles an association in which, through division of labor, each person seeks to provide his own support and to contribute to the general welfare.

Second marriages are identical with first marriages except that they are celebrated with somewhat less ostentation. Furthermore, a married man is more independent of his community in the material sense, and sometimes he is likewise more independent of the wife.

II. Other Types of Conjugal Union

588 595 Besides marriage there are innumerable kinds of conjugal unions, such as agreements between capable individuals, that at times have legal consequences, some of which are even extensive. All these kinds may be grouped as two types: concubinage and free union.

595 Concubinage. This is a union in which at least one of the parties is a slave. It is very common for a master to treat one or more of his slaves like wives. Some men like the arrangement because it does away with all the difficulties arising from the bride price and the often exasperating involvements with an affinal family. Concubinage practiced by a free man has the disadvantage, however, of [205] his children being his slaves, since children retain their mother's status. It is true that this custom has been circumvented. It is accepted that the female slave is regarded as free once she has borne a child to a free husband and he has recognized it. This, however, does not erase the original stigma; children borne of free wives always [578] consider themselves superior to their siblings whose mother was a slave. Family tensions arise out of this, which become acute upon the death of the fa.

Concubinage, practiced on a large scale by free men, has, indeed, perverted all the communities. Polygamous households have had grave difficulties because the wives, being different in rank and yet forced to live side by side, have sacrificed everything to their resentments and hatreds.

562 Between the omnipotence of the first and the humble
581 lot of the second there is every possible gradation. This is all
the more true in that, thanks to polygamy, lawful households
595 may be found in association with the free unions and concubinage desired by the husband, in such a way that the position of each person in the family, already affected by all these contingencies, is, in the last analysis, dominated by the absolute authority of the fa. We shall see this clearly in connection with filiation, and it is no less apparent regarding wives, except for those already described who have sufficient influence and the means to live virtually independent of the rest of the family. Although in fact a wife who was not paid for has no regular position and her children legally do not belong to either of their parents, although a concubine does not even count as a person, according to custom, and her children are their genitor's slaves, merely by the will of the fa either of them may have an enviable pre-eminence in the family, especially envied by the lawful wives.

593 Under these circumstances, it may be admitted that con-
562 jugal duties, obedience, fidelity, and their counterparts, the rights to help and assistance, have nuances that vary from one situation to another. It is true that a wife must obey her husband and that he is allowed to resort to [208] corporal punishment to control her, which he does not fail to use. She is not completely at his mercy, however. For instance, he can require her to live in a given place; nevertheless, if it has been agreed that she is not to leave the tribal territory, and this usually tacitly understood, he may not take her away. He can force her to do household chores, but if she is free, he cannot require her to do servile tasks. In the same way, he cannot rent out her services, put her up as security, or sell her.

837 The duty of reciprocal fidelity is most often very vague. Admittedly, this is not expected of the husband, and indeed, the wife often encourages his lapses from virtue on the theory that this indulgence will attach him to her. As far as a wife's misbehavior is concerned, a husband does not always give it much importance and is sometimes not at all averse to profiting
[848] from it. If children result from her indiscretions, he is not distressed in the least about accepting or denying them.

595 A husband owes his wife food, clothing, and lodging within his means, and unless he has imprudently acquired too many wives, everything will be kept within the proper limits. In any event, he must be impartial toward all his wives on one particular point if he wants domestic tranquillity: he must honor each of them in turn with his favors.

In theory, a husband is supposed to treat his wives alike in all things, although it is apparent from the foregoing that this is practically impossible. Besides, it is usually agreed that the first wife, no matter who she is, whether slave or free, has certain prerogatives. She acts as a kind of mother to her co-wives, supervises their work and their pursuits, and issues all the supplies. With reference to her husband, she acts as confidante and adviser.

851 Filiation. This is to be regarded as the totality of facts which, for the sake of clarity, we shall divide into two groups: birth, and giving a name. [209]

843 Birth. A pregnant woman, by virtue of her condition, is subject to a kind of special regime whose special features are the following.

In principle, she must forego sexual relations from the moment she feels the child move until two or three months after its birth. This is not done for reasons of hygiene, but rather because the child is thought to require it as a kind of deference, without which it will die.

From the standpoint of diet, the expectant mother should be well and even abundantly fed. When possible she is given the [262] heart and liver of slaughtered wild animals; these are centers of life which, if eaten, will strengthen the child's soul and make the child a courageous individual. A pregnant woman often wants some [261] of the yellow or red clay which is sold in the markets, which [443] for some unknown reason she will eat as if it were chocolate.

She must refrain from visiting dying people, attending funerals, going into mourning, or mingling with crowds, all this in order to avoid any contact that might injure the fragile soul she is carrying.

D. Position of Women

562 Women's society has remained much more impenetrable to European civilization. Women very rarely go to French schools, and unlike the men, who, during their military service and otherwise, are partly immersed in our system of civilization, they have few contacts with the Whites and appear to be even more attached to custom than their husbands. Very few speak French, and for all these [191] reasons their society has remained closed and very imperfectly known to the Whites.

562 Reasoning from what is known of their juridicial situation, we 858 have deduced their inferior position. Perhaps a better knowledge of their role and of their importance in the society will lead us to very different conclusions. From the legal point of view, a woman is always a minor; she belongs first to her own community, to which she owes obedience, then to her husband's community. When the marriage is legal, that is to say, when the husband has paid the matrimonial settlement, the children belong to the husband; if not, in the case of concubinage, the woman's family can claim the child, because it belongs to the family, as does everything of the mother's.

562 Her marriage is decided on by the fa; although in practice 582 the woman is often consulted indirectly beforehand, and she has a certain liberty in her choice. Even a slave can refuse to marry her 583 master, despite gifts and promises. But a woman is forbidden to marry someone she considers a relative, that is, someone who belongs to her paternal line and who bears the same name she does. Exogamy is the rule.

562 Yet, when a woman marries, she keeps her paternal name and her personal taboos; sometimes she adds her name to that of her son, 593 who normally bears the dyamu of his father. The woman remains very attached [75] to her family and goes to stay with them often. Among them she will find support in case of a difference of opinion [586] with her husband. In case of divorce through the fault of the husband, he loses all rights over the wife as well as the settlement he had paid.

595 In the system of polygamy, the first wife is mistress of the house; the other wives gather at her place for meals. She distributes [431] the husband's presents, but aside from these privileges, the rights of the wives are equal as are those of their children.

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> sees everything. The old men explain this to you with an intensity that proves their good faith, and children recite the sayings of the old men with a frankness so naive that one cannot misunderstand it.

a Being endowed with reason and all powerful. The term is the translation of the word sa.

It is apparent that in the beginning the word Alla in no way meant a Being or an Individual; it simply expressed a concept, an idea already known, accepted and translated by the word sa, and the Bambara simply adopted a foreign word corresponding to their own concept.

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If to the Bambara the word Alla had meant the Divinity Himself, the Supreme Being, would they ever have dared to speak it, to make it their own? I cannot bring myself to believe that they would, among them the name of a powerful person, a religious chief, or venerated being is never spoken in vain or in an unsuitable manner. If some of their kings, among them /79/ N'golo, not to mention others, punished anyone caught speaking his /the royal/ name by fines and prison, cast them into slavery, and even beheaded them as guilty of the crime of lese majesty, what would they not have to fear from the Creator if they spoke His name in vain and inappropriately! Furthermore, it is a widespread custom to avoid speaking the name of one who is feared or venerated.

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No well-bred and self-respecting woman ever speaks the name of her husband. She speaks of him as né tigi ("my master"), so tigi ("the master of the house"). Most frequently she adorns him with a borrowed name, a bougna toua, or name of respect, and a polygamist has several such names, each wife giving him one of her own invention.

In well-brought-up families -- and most of them are (1) -- the

> 1. Our Bambara Negroes have great respect for the members of their families and are considerate of them;

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in this respect they are far superior to any of the Arabs of Algeria, for example. Family life is more open and cordial among them.

children do not speak the name of their father, especially if he is a gouatigi, or family head, and when a swarm of children are enjoying themselves around their old daddy, only one word is on all the little lips to awaken his attention, avoid his reprimand, call for his caress, and bring forth his smile: Koké-yo -- koké-wé! (2)

2. I use the word Koké-yo -- (Né koké) koké we (koké, "I beg you, Koké") -- because it is the most common; there are obviously other similar terms. Favorite wives also like to call their husbands by this name. For everyone it is a term of respect and at the same time it is tender, affectionate, and coaxing.

[888] 576 551 Old men are given borrowed names, bougna toua, out of respect and veneration, and the reason for this practice is to avoid having to speak their names in vain and unsuitably. The practice is current, and it is even carried to an extreme, for although a child is given a respect name within his family, he is never called by that name. How many people there are whose real name is not known except by close relatives and friends! All the Dougoutigi, To-n-tigi, Ba-koroba, and [553] Moké-touama received a name on the eighth day after their birth, and the names used to designate them are borrowed names. /80/

888 793 576 551 In the environs of Ségou, where Islam is widespread and spreads farther every day, the sacrificers to the protecting genii of the villages, the gnéna-n-sonna ba, or dougoutigi, have lost some of their prestige, but anyone who respects them, even if he be a Moslem, never speaks their names. At the present time in Bani country, where the old customs and traditions are preserved with jealous care, there is not a

585 shouting songs that partly drown out the rolling of the drums and the roaring of the horns of the band. The boli gives a last roar, and its priest carries it to its foul temple where the air breathed is warmed by the steam of hot blood and never cooled. The huts open their doors, and a stream of women, children, and young girls rush along the alleys and mingle their voices with those that are arriving. The [535] crowd of women divides into several groups, and again they bend double in unimaginable contorsions that a pen cannot describe; all parts of their bodies shake and move, as in a gentle wave that goes forward and folds back on itself. They glide over the ground raising a cloud of dust and, preceded by drums and in a blast of guns, they arrive thus slowly in the couple's inner court. Here everybody flinds food ready. The middle of the court is full of huge gourds of to, or gruel, dégé, or millet flour mixed with honey water, and jugs full of d'lo, or millet beer, and while the newlyweds are enjoying their first love-making, drinking, eating, dancing, and shouting is going on near them. For I forgot to say that the young bride will long since have left her frenzied, howling mob. As soon as the boli has been put away, the women come to lead her to her dwelling (1). Before

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1. Every Bambara woman has her own hut separate from her husband's. A Bambara man who has only one wife sleeps in his wife's hut; if he has several, on the contrary, the woman who is summoned goes to lie in that of her husband. Some rich men provide each wife with a hut, an inner court, and a b'lon, or entry hut. In that case the first wife does not have a hut separate from that of her husband, and the husband goes to spend his nights with one or another as he chooses.

taking her into the marital sanctuary, where her husband is already